



## **The Palestinian Affairs Unit in Jerusalem Announces the 2021 Community Solutions Program**

### **Deadline: October 28, 2020**

The Community Solutions Program (CSP), sponsored by the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and implemented by IREX, provides community leaders (age 25-38) from around the world with a four-month professional development exchange that includes hands-on learning and leadership instruction in the United States. Community Solutions Fellows then return to complete a six-month community-based initiative to integrate what they have learned with their community development work.

### **Program activities:**

**Four-month U.S.-based fellowship:** CSP fellows are matched with non-profit organizations, private entities, and government offices across the United States where they work with U.S. colleagues on initiatives related to issues they face in their own communities. Community Solutions leaders work in one of four technical areas: Environmental Issues, Tolerance and Conflict Resolution, Transparency and Accountability, and Women and Gender Issues. For example: A gender-rights activist from Vietnam focused on reducing human trafficking works with YWCA on human trafficking in Houston, Texas.

**Community Leadership Institute:** The Community Leadership Institute (CLI) is a leadership academy that provides customized learning and coaching to each CSP Leader. The CLI uses a blended-learning approach, where leaders participate in online sessions and in-person workshops, receive professional coaching, engage in experiential learning, and interact with other professionals in their field.

**Community-based initiatives:** CSP fellows develop innovative community action projects in collaboration with their U.S. host institutions and implement these projects after they return to their home countries, applying the new knowledge and skills gained through the U.S. practicum and Community Leadership Institute. Fellows share their projects in online portfolios, allowing them to connect and collaborate with a broad network of global change makers.

**International network of community development professionals:** CSP fellows continue to network and collaborate with like-minded leaders from around the world on global development issues through alumni activities such as the annual Solutions Summits which bring together CSP alumni, U.S. host organization representatives, and international thought leaders to exchange good practices and innovate solutions to shared community development challenges

The program covers the cost of most expenses associated with:

- J-1 visa support;
- Round-trip travel from participants' home city to the U.S.;
- Monthly allowance to cover housing, meals, and other living expenses while in the U.S.; and
- Accident and sickness insurance.

### **Candidate Qualifications:**

- Applicants must be between the ages of 25-38 as of January 1, 2021;
- Applicants must have at least two years of experience working on community development, either as a full-time or part-time employee or volunteer;
- Applicants must be living and working in their home country (individuals with refugee status working on behalf of their home community may be given special consideration);
- Applicants must have a high level of proficiency in spoken and written English;
- Applicants must not be currently participating in an academic, training, or research program in the U.S.;
- Applicants must have a high level of proficiency in spoken and written English at the time of application;
  - Semifinalists will be required to take or submit recent scores for a TOEFL or IELTS English language test.
- Applicants must be available to travel to the U.S. for four months from August to December 2021;
- Applicants must not be citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. and not applied for U.S. permanent residency within the past three years;
- Applicants who have participated in an exchange program sponsored by the U.S. Government must have fulfilled their two-year home residency requirement;
- Applicants must be committed to returning to their home country for a minimum of two years after completing the program.

### **Application Guidelines and Deadlines:**

Applications must be submitted online at <http://bit.ly/csp2021apply> by October 28, 2020.

### **For questions or other inquiries:**

Jerusalem and West Bank Applicants should contact [JerusalemExchanges@state.gov](mailto:JerusalemExchanges@state.gov) for more information. Gaza Applicants should send an email to [Jrsgazaexchanges@state.gov](mailto:Jrsgazaexchanges@state.gov) for more information.